

In March, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the bill on an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 18 to 3. Our colleagues in the House passed a similar measure with a resounding vote—308 to 116—a few weeks later.

Some of the most vulnerable parts of the world have been ravaged by AIDS, TB and malaria. Through this bill, we have an opportunity to turn the tide on these terrible diseases.

Around the world, all eyes are on the U.S. Senate.

Although it has been a long 2½ months of negotiation with those who placed holds on the bill—and I applaud Senator BIDEN and Senator LUGAR on their tenacity and leadership in reaching an agreement last night to finally advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and to support this vital, life-saving legislation.

#### CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have repeatedly come to the floor to talk about the genocide in Darfur, a tragedy that is now entering its sixth year, with little end in sight. Senator SNOWE and 27 other Senators joined me last month in writing to the President saying that his legacy would be largely affected by whether definitive action is taken to halt this humanitarian crisis on his watch.

Unfortunately, I fear President Bush will leave office and hand the crisis in Darfur to the next President.

Sadly, there is another African crisis that also demands the world's attention—this one in Zimbabwe.

On March 29, the country held a presidential election in which opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai won over incumbent Robert Mugabe by nearly 5 percent. Official results were withheld by the government for more than a month, raising concerns of official manipulation. Opposition leaders and supporters, election observers, and reporters were harassed and in some cases detained. Some were tortured, others killed.

Under those results, in which neither candidate received more than 50 percent, a runoff was scheduled for June 27.

The period leading up to this runoff has been a tragedy for the people of Zimbabwe, for democracy, for the rule of law, and for the entire southern African region.

President Mugabe, once a hero of Zimbabwe's independence, has used violence to destroy his country's democratic process.

Opposition supporters are harassed, attacked, and threatened if they do not vote for Mugabe. Tsvangirai has been detained repeatedly and has survived three assassination attempts. His party's secretary general, Tendai Biti, was arrested earlier this month and charged with treason.

And then this week, government thugs raided opposition party head-

quarters, rounding up supporters, including women and children.

Mugabe even said in regards to the next round of voting, "We are not going to give up our country because of a mere X. How can a ballpoint pen fight with a gun?"

Mugabe has driven Zimbabwe's economy into the ground, starved his own people, and brought sweeping international condemnation upon his government. He has further added to his people's suffering by manipulating the distribution of international food aid.

The process has been so undermined by President Mugabe that on Monday, Morgan Tsvangirai withdrew from the race and sought refuge in the Dutch embassy.

The man who won the most votes in the first round of Zimbabwe's election now has to seek the protection of a foreign embassy out of fear the government will take his life.

This is outrageous.

The situation in Zimbabwe is a tragedy that the international community must address. The world cannot stand idly by anymore while petty dictators destroy the lives and ignore the democratic will of their own populations.

What message are we sending when murderous governments such as those in Burma, Sudan, and Zimbabwe are allowed to thumb their noses at basic human rights and the international community?

The UN Security Council said this week that it would be "impossible for a free and fair election to take place." UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon also strongly condemned the situation in Zimbabwe, saying that an election under current conditions "would lack all legitimacy."

And recently 14 former African presidents, two former UN Secretaries-General and 24 other prominent African leaders signed a joint letter to Mugabe, calling for an end to the pre-election violence and for a free and fair election.

But where pressure has not been strong enough is from the democracies neighboring Zimbabwe. Recently Senators FEINGOLD, KERRY, and WHITEHOUSE joined me to meet with the ambassadors from the southern African nations of Botswana, Zambia, and South Africa to discuss the need for greater attention to the crisis in Zimbabwe.

While I am pleased that Botswanan and Zambian leaders have spoken more forcefully on Zimbabwe in recent days, these nations must do much more to help the people of Zimbabwe. Many African leaders have argued over the years that they must take greater responsibility for political and human rights reform on their own continent. I suggest Zimbabwe is an urgent opportunity for just such action.

South Africa in particular, a nation that the world stood behind to end the tragic injustice of apartheid, has been noticeably quiet in its responsibility to halt Mugabe's reign of destruction.

President Mbeki has tried quiet diplomacy, but it is clear that Mugabe does not respect these efforts.

The South African ruling party said this week that "any attempts by outside players to impose regime change will merely deepen the crisis." That argument misses the point.

It is the people of Zimbabwe that are demanding change.

The right to associate freely, to vote without intimidation or violence, to peacefully choose one's leader—these are all basic democratic values shared around the world. They are the values that brought a peaceful end to apartheid.

In fact, election protocols agreed to by the members of the Southern African Development Community demand certain benchmarks for elections to be considered legitimate—benchmarks which are certainly not being met in Zimbabwe.

South Africa, more than any other nation in Africa, has the ability and the moral responsibility to rein in Mugabe. The rest of the global community stands ready to help South Africa with this urgent need.

The world must step up against the injustices in Zimbabwe. The Mugabe regime must not conduct a runoff election until conditions allow for a free and fair process, including an end to political violence and intimidation, the release of political detainees, free access of election observers, the freedom to associate and hold political rallies, and a transparent and honest vote counting process.

Without such minimal steps, the world must not recognize the results of a rigged process in which Mugabe will simply proclaim himself president for another term.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL ANDREW FRANCIS WHITACRE

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of the brave lance corporal from Bryant, Indiana. Andrew Whitacre, 21 years old, died on June 19, 2008, in Farah Province, Afghanistan, from injuries sustained while his unit was conducting combat operations. He was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, G Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division from Twentynine Palms, CA.

Andrew graduated from Jay County High School in 2005. Andrew loved sports and was an avid snowboarder. Those who knew him best recall a brave young man with an extraordinary sense of generosity. He enlisted in the Marines at the age of 17, telling his family that if he served, another would be spared that decision. Andrew left for boot camp in July of 2005, shortly after graduating from high school. Proud of his service and patriotic in spirit, Andrew never wavered in his decision to enlist. His family said it was the surest decision he ever made.

In March of this year, Andrew proposed to his fiancée, Casey McGuire of